

The Photograph That Changed Mike's Life (1 of 3) by 1AlyssaEime1

Series: [The Mileven Trilogy \[1\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

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1. The Loss Of Eleven

It had been exactly 5 months since Eleven disappeared along with the Demogorgon. Mike Wheeler still remembers the scene very clearly. From when the monster burst through the classroom door, El standing to her feet with bloodshot eyes, her ears and nose dripping with blood and Mike standing to his feet, crying and shouting her name.

"El, where are you?" Tears were streaming down his face. Even Lucas was crying. Karen Wheeler, Mike's mom, and her husband, Ted, found Mike in an ambulance, wrapped in a blanket and tears drying on his face. Karen took her son into her arms and held him tightly like before when he found out that Will Byers 'died'.

Things had not been the same for Mike. He never would have known it was possible for boys to cry themselves to sleep. He couldn't even look at Eggos the same way. Whenever his mom asked him if he wanted any for breakfast, he would just storm off to his room and slam the door. His parents were confused and concerned about what was going on. Karen never meant to offend Mike. She was only trying to make him breakfast.

Every now and then, Mike would have massive breakdowns. Screaming and crying saying;

"She's not dead. I'm telling you, she's NOT dead!"

This was normal behaviour now. Karen wondered who he was talking about. She tried to convince Mike to go into Counselling but he refused, once again, storming off to his bedroom.

"Who's 'she'?" She asked that question often but never got an answer.

One day, Mike was so sad and angry that he threw a mug at the wall. It smashed everywhere but luckily, the pieces didn't hit anyone. Nancy was still grieving about her best friend, Barb but she realised that she's not coming back. Ever. Every day, she would look at her photos of her and Barb and can't help but smile. This was very different for Mike. He had nothing of Eleven except for the watch he

let her borrow.

I shouldn't have put it back on. I should have let her have it. When she comes back, I'll give it to her.

The blonde wig got lost somewhere in the woods. The blue jacket got lost somewhere at the middle school. He still kept her blanket fort up, though no one was allowed to touch it. One day, Will asked about it.

"Why do you have that fort up?"

"El stayed in there to hide. It's where she slept." Mike replied, smiling a bit too quickly, almost unnoticed. He really missed El and wanted her back fast. His life was changed when Chief Hopper came to his house the following week.

End of Chapter 1: The Loss Of Eleven

2. The Photograph

Chief Jim Hopper knocked on the Wheeler's front door on a Saturday early afternoon. Karen was surprised when she opened the door.

"Hopper, hi. How are you?"

"Good. I need to talk to Mike." Hopper replied, looking serious.

"Sure. He's in the basement." Karen said.

"Thanks. How's he been holding up?" He asked, concerned.

"Not well. He's been having breakdowns, he's screaming and crying. He's also been crying about the number eleven, saying that *she's* gone. Who is Eleven?" Karen was very confused to why her son was having breakdowns about a number.

"It's a long story, Karen. I'm sorry." Hopper put a hand on Mrs Wheeler's shoulder.

Hopper walked down to the basement where Mike was hiding from everyone. The basement was Mike's hideaway. No one was allowed to go in there anymore. Not even his best friends, except for Will Byers. Will was very close to him. He only let him stay over because of what happened to him months earlier. Mike felt bad so he only let Will stay. "Mike? It's me, Hopper."

"Hi." That was all that managed to come out of his mouth.

Hopper could tell Mike was very upset just by the sound of his voice. Mike didn't talk much either only to Will.

"Do you know why I'm here?" Hopper asked, half smiling. Mike shook his head.

"Eleven is alive."

Mike's eyes shot open, with a lot of emotions filling up his brain.

"How do you know?"

"I saw her in person yesterday. And I have a photo to prove it." Hopper held up a glossy photograph with the white backside facing Mike. He handed the photo, face down, to Mike, who was shaking.

Mike slowly flipped the photo in both hands and gasped. There she was. Eleven. She was alive but didn't look healthy. Her hair had grown into a stylish but messy pixie cut. She had a small smile but her eyes looked sad. Mike was in awe of her beauty. He started crying. He pulled Hopper into a hug.

"Thank you so much for showing me that El is alive." He said through tears. He handed the photo back to Hopper who then rejected it.

"No, you keep it. That's why I brought it here. To give it to you." Hopper said, smiling. Hopper didn't really like hugging kids after what happened to Sara but this time, he made an exception.

"Thank you." Mike said, a single tear falling down from his eye. Hopper started to head out the door when Mike stopped him.

"Wait. Where is she?" He said, very concerned.

"We'll talk about this another day. Right now, just get some rest." Hopper walked up the stairs and left the basement. Mike was left crying and holding the photo with both hands, caressing Eleven's face through the photo. Just then, his Walkie-Talkie started to make static sounds then came on a voice. A girl's voice.

Mike. Mike.

Mike ran to El's fort and picked up the Walkie-Talkie.

"El! El, it's me, Mike. Where are you? Please tell me where you are!"

Upside Down.

Mike's heart dropped to his stomach and the Walkie-Talkie cut out. He couldn't believe that El was talking to him from The Upside Down.

End of Chapter 2: The Photograph

3. We Must Find Eleven

It had been a week later that Mike decided to apologise to Lucas and Dustin. He rode his bike to Dustin's house first to then discover Lucas was over. Mike knocked on the door and Dustin answered.

"Hey, Mike. What do you want?" Dustin said, cheerfully.

"I'm sorry for pushing you away all these months. I drew first blood." Mike held out his hand and Dustin took it in his own hand and shook it.

"That's ok, buddy. Lucas is inside if you want to talk to him as well." Dustin said, offering Mike inside.

"Yeah, I wanna apologise to him too." He and Dustin were making their way to Dustin's room where Lucas was behind the door.

"What the hell are you doing here?" Lucas scolded.

"I drew first blood. I'm sorry." Once again, Mike held out his hand. Lucas, too, took it in his own and shook it.

"That's alright. I'm sorry about Eleven." Lucas said, while patting Mike on the shoulder.

"According to Hopper, she's not dead."

"How does he know?" Dustin said, tilting his head.

Mike pulled out the photo of El and shows Dustin and Lucas.

"Holy shit, she's not dead!" Lucas exclaimed.

"Is that *The Upside Down*?" Dustin asked, with a sad facial expression. Mike nodded.

"Well, if she's in there, we should go get her!" Lucas said, smiling. Mike looks up, hopeful.

"But it could be very dangerous. I mean, it's *The Upside Down*! And

plus, we hardly know where the gate is." Dustin said. He was a very good thinker.

"Remember when Hopper and Joyce were talking about when they went into The Upside Down to find Will? They said the gate was in Hawkins Lab, underground." Lucas said.

"We would have to sneak in somehow to get to the gate. Once we find the gate, we go in and we find Eleven." Dustin said.

"It's settled, then. Let's go find Eleven!" Mike said, raising his fist in the air.

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Eleven was standing right next to Mike when he apologised and when the other boys made their plan. She couldn't see or hear him but she knew he was there. She could feel his presence. El could only hear and see him in her head. She smiled because she knew she will be home soon. Just then, a thought came into her head; *If they don't find me, I'll die*. She started to cry. She missed Mike so much. The night he put his lips on hers was magical but she didn't know what that was or what it meant. It was very nice, though.

End of Chapter 3: We Must Find Eleven

4. He Found Her

All of the boys got their backpacks and bikes ready for a big adventure. They also made sure to wear black clothing so they can blend in with the darkness of the night. Will stayed behind at home with Joyce because he didn't want to go back in there. The other guys understood and set off on their journey to find El.

"I'll definitely make sure that you'll meet her." Mike said, patting Will's shoulder.

"Good luck!" Will replied, giving Mike the thumbs up.

Mike rode away on his bike and caught up with Lucas and Dustin. They were riding in the dark with their lights on but once they reached the Lab, they made sure to turn them off and chain their bikes up to the fence. They saw the hole that Hopper cut to break into the Lab. They all climbed in and walked slowly up to the Lab's door.

They managed to sneak in the front door without being detected. All of the boys were walking down a hallway when two workers were turning a corner towards them. They silently panicked and hid in a broken elevator. The workers passed and the coast was clear.

"Shit, that was close." Dustin whispered.

"This place is weird. Was Eleven really raised in here?" Lucas whispered.

"Shh, yes." Mike whispered, putting a finger over his mouth in a shushing motion.

They saw another elevator and walked inside. The door closed and they went down underground. Mike was breathing heavily and then Dustin put his hand on Mike's shoulder.

"You alright, man." He said.

"Yeah, just nervous... and a little scared." Mike said, with a nervous look on his face.

The elevator stopped. They were underground. The doors opened and the boys exited. Lucas brought some gas masks that he found in a closet back at his house. He pulled them out of his bag and handed them to Mike and Dustin. He gave Mike another one.

"That's for Eleven." Lucas said, pointing to it. Mike smiled.

Mike had found El's jacket in the Lost & Found at school so he brought it with him to give to her to keep her warm. The boys put the masks on and headed to a door that had a warning sign on it.

WARNING: HAZARDOUS ROOM AHEAD

(TOXIC ATMOSPHERE)

Mike opened the door and all of the boys gasped in shock. The room was dark with two lights flickering wildly. There was a water tank in the middle of the room and a weird creature growing on the wall opposite the tank.

"This must be the gate." Lucas said.

"After you, Mike." Dustin said. Mike turned around to look at them before slowly turning back around to face the terrifying gate and then took a step inside. The others followed and they immediately found themselves in the most horrifying place in the world: The Upside Down.

The boys were walking through its forest covered in slime and specks of decay flying from the black sky. They were too scared to say anything but their silence seemed to say a lot.

"El! Eleven!" Mike shouted. Lucas and Dustin did the same.

In the distance, Mike saw a small figure too small to be the Demogorgon. It was Eleven. Mike ran over to her calling her name with Lucas and Dustin following close behind. Mike was gripping El's mask tightly while running as fast as he could. Mike and then the

others reached Eleven who was lying on the cold ground, almost passed out. Luckily, she was not dead. Mike started to cry.

"El, please wake up. It's me, Mike." Mike was desperate for her to wake up. He had missed her for months and all he wanted was her to be alive and well.

Slowly, El's eyes started to open and Mike was relieved to see her alive. He started crying harder and he put the bass mask on El and started breathing very hard breaths. He also got her jacket and put it on her and then, he rubbed his hands over her arms to keep her extra warm. He picked her up in his arms and turned towards Dustin and Lucas. Mike noticed they were both crying their eyes out, hugging each other. Eleven was their friend too and they missed her a lot but not as much as Mike. While keeping a tight grip on El, Mike heard her speak for the first time in ages.

"Mike... Mike, is that you?" Eleven was speaking very quietly and weakly but Mike could still hear her.

"Yeah, El. It's me." He said, with tears streaming down his face. </p>

They ran back to the gate and got out as quickly as they could. They ran back to the elevator and the doors closed. Mike buried his face into El's beautiful, short hair and kissed her. She gave a small smile. The doors opened and the boys and El were confronted by Dr Brenner and his agents. El used her powers to finally kill Brenner and all of the agents that were crowded in the hallway. Mike, Lucas and Dustin pushed passed through all of the dead bodies and Mike purposely stomped his foot on Brenner's face leaving him with a bloody nose just like Eleven.

They quickly exited the building and ran back to the hole in the fence. Lucas and Dustin crawled through first, then helped Mike get El out of the fence and passed her along as if she was lying flat on a conveyor belt. Then he crawled out and they rode back to Mike's house. Lucas opened Mike's front door and they all went inside. Karen Wheeler was sitting on the couch in the living room with Ted when she saw Mike carrying Eleven. Karen stood up out of her seat.

"Mom, this is Eleven. We need to get her to the hospital fast!" Mike

was desperate to get El to the hospital so she can be well treated and taken care of.

Karen got all of the boys and El in the car to go to the hospital. Mike sat in the back with El next to him, who was near unconscious. Dustin was next to El in the back of the car while she was in the middle seat. They quickly drove to the hospital and when they arrived, Mike picked her up Bridal-Style and they all hurried inside.

Karen informed the lady behind the desk that El needs help and fast. Then, some doctors got El a room and took her from Mike's arms and put her on the hospital bed. They hooked Eleven up to a whole lot of machines and they put a breathing mask over her face. Mike stayed by her side the entire time while the doctors did their work.

"I can't thank you enough for doing this." Mike said to one of the doctors.

"It's our job, kid. We make sure that people get the proper medical treatment. Don't worry, we'll get your sister out of here as soon as possible." The doctor said, smiling reassuringly.

"Oh, she's not my sister. She's my girlfriend." Mike said, smiling and holding her pale hand. He looked at El just in time to see her smiling.

"She's gonna have to stay overnight. You can stay until her parents come." The doctor said.

"She's doesn't have any parents." Mike said.

"She's an orphan?" The doctor replied.

"I guess you can say that." Mike said, "What's your name by the way, Sir?"

"Dr Armstrong. What's your name, kid?" Dr Armstrong asked.

"I'm Mike Wheeler, short for Michael." Mike replied. He and Dr Armstrong shook hands.

"And who's this lovely girl here?" Dr Armstrong asked.

"This is Eleven." Mike said, running his hand through her hair.

"Eleven?" Dr Armstrong said, confused.

"El for short." Mike replied.

"Why is her name Eleven?" Dr Armstrong asked.

"It's a long story." Mike replied. Dr Armstrong finished treating El.

"Like I said, Eleven needs to stay here over night but I'm gonna let you stay in here as well so you can keep her safe, keep her company." Mike nodded in understanding. Dr Armstrong left the room wishing Mike and Eleven a good night.

Mike found a chair and sat in it to fall asleep in. He was so happy that he found her and that she is now very much alive and well. He was so happy that he couldn't wait to see her in the morning.

End of Chapter 4: He Found Her

5. We Can Go Home Now

El woke up in her hospital bed to then see Mike sleeping in a chair next to her bed. Mike then woke up slowly to then see El awake and well.

"El!" Mike leaped out of his seat and hugged El tightly but not too tightly because he didn't want to hurt her because of her small frame.

"Mike!" El hugged back and she could smell his hair and she knew she was home. Dr Armstrong knocked on the door and Mike and El separated.

"Good morning, Mike and Eleven. I hope you two had a good night's sleep." He said. Mike and El both nodded, smiling.

Mike was holding her hand and he started caressing it with his thumb. Dr Armstrong gave El a small rectangular box with the words;

PAINKILLERS (FAST RELIEF)

"El, these are you to take two times a day." Dr Armstrong informed. El gave Mike a confused look.

"I'll help you understand, El." Mike said. She smiled.

"Ok, so everything is all good and now you can go home. Have a good day." Dr Armstrong left the room. Mike helped El out of bed and got their stuff and before they headed out the front door, El said;

"Thank you."

The woman behind the desk replied with; "That's ok, Sweetie. Have a lovely day." Mike smiled at her and he and El headed out of the front entrance.

"Wow." El said, as she saw the sunlight for the first time in ages.

Mike looked over at bike rack and saw that Karen Wheeler had left his bike for him, ready to ride El home. El hopped on before Mike and then they rode back to Mike's house. They arrived at his house and they entered through the front door. Karen was waiting for them in the living room and she greeted El and welcomed her to their home.

"Hello, I'm Mrs Wheeler, Mike's Mom." She said.

El smiled. She stayed very close to Mike because she hadn't been there in so long and was nervous to meet and re-meet everyone.

"Mom, this is Eleven or El for short." Mike said. Karen smiled at her son and his new friend but she didn't know that Mike and El knew each other for months.

"Mike, I made some Eggos for you if you want any. El, would you like some Eggos?" Karen asked El.

El's face lit up so bright when she heard Karen say that. She nodded and she and Mike headed into the dining room, hand in hand, to enjoy some Eggos.

Eleven was finally back home in Hawkins with Mike.

End of Chapter 5: We Can Go Home Now

End of The Photograph That Changed Mike's Life